

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Amendment in reply to the Office Action mailed October 19, 2005. By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 2, 4, 6-7, and 17. Accordingly, claims 1-4 and 6-19 remain pending in this application. The originally-filed specification, drawings, and claims fully support the subject matter of amended claims 2, 4, 6-7, and 17. Thus, this Amendment introduces no new matter.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claim 7 was objected to for not further limiting claim 1 and claim 17 was objected to for reciting "station" instead of "workstation." Applicants have amended claim 7 and have amended claim 17 as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants submit that claim 7 further limits independent claim 1 by introducing additional limitations to claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claims 7 and 17.

In the Office Action, claims 2, 4, 6-7 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, claims 2, 4, 6-7 and 12 were considered indefinite for lack of proper antecedent bases. Applicants have amended claims 2, 4, and 6-7 to provide proper antecedent bases. With respect to claim 12, the "said time based event" limitation was deleted in an Amendment dated July 11, 2005. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the section 112, second paragraph rejection against claims 2, 4, 6-7 and 12.

Also in the Office Action, claims 1, 7-9, and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,240,328 to LaLonde et al. ("LaLonde.") Additionally, claims 2, 6, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over LaLonde in view of Official Notice; claims 3 and 18 were rejected

under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over LaLonde in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,341,304 to Sakamoto et al. ("Sakamoto."); and claims 4, 10-11, and 13-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over LaLonde in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,477,437 to Hirota ("Hirota.") Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons provided below.

Initially, Applicants note that the Patent Office bears the initial burden of presenting a prima facie case of unpatentability. (M.P.E.P. § 2142.) Prior art anticipates only if each and every element as set forth in the claims is found described in the prior art. (M.P.E.P. § 2131.) And a prima facie case of obviousness requires, inter alia, that the prior art references, when combined, must teach or suggest every aspect of the claims. (M.P.E.P. § 2143.)

LaLonde discloses a manufacturing method for assembling a number of products by generating and scheduling dynamically, a number of assembly instructions from modeling information. LaLonde further discloses allowing for exact assembly instructions to be generated for a full theoretical scope of a product line, where the generated instructions do not require any human lookup or inference and that the instructions required to build the final product are derived from a model of the product. (See, e.g., Col. 1, lines 40-50; Col 2, lines 10-18 of LaLonde)

LaLonde does not disclose or suggest each and every aspect of independent claim 1. For example, LaLonde fails to disclose or suggest, among other things, a computer based method of displaying a changed manufacturing instruction, comprising the steps of establishing a desired fluid change associated with a manufacturing characteristic and enabling a change in a manufacturing instruction in response to the

desired fluid change, as recited in claim 1. LaLonde simply discloses a mechanism for generating dynamically assembly instructions for building a product based on modeling information and scheduling dynamically the assembly instructions among the assembly stations. LaLonde fails to disclose a mechanism for changing the manufacturing instructions without a need to halt the operation of an assembly line.

Sakamoto, Hirota, and the Official Notice taken in the Office Action do not remedy the deficiency noted above regarding LaLonde. Sakamoto discloses a production process where defects which occur on an assembly line are transmitted to a correction line, and further discloses that it is difficult to correct defects at the positions in the line where they occur. (See, e.g., Col 2, line 5-11, 61-65.) Hirota discloses an assembly work support system that provides instructions from the system to a worker regarding work procedures, work contents, and particular instruction points, and receives information from the worker. (See, e.g., Col 1, line 13-17.) Sakamoto and Hirota neither disclose nor suggest establishing a desired fluid change associated with a manufacturing characteristic and enabling a change in a manufacturing instruction in response to the desired fluid change, as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully requests withdrawal of the Section 102(e) rejection against claim 1.

With respect to dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, 14-17 and 19, the additional teachings relied upon by the Examiner do not overcome the deficiencies noted above regarding LaLonde. Accordingly, Applicants submit that dependent claims 2-4, 6-8, 14-17 and 19 are allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 1 is allowable.

For similar reasons presented above, LaLonde does not disclose or suggest, for example, establishing a desired fluid change in a manufacturing characteristic and enabling a change in a manufacturing instruction in response to said desired fluid change, as recited in independent claim 9. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of independent claim 9 be withdrawn.

With respect to dependent claims 10 and 11, the additional teachings relied upon by the Examiner do not overcome the deficiencies noted above regarding LaLonde. Accordingly, Applicants submit that dependent claims 10 and 11 are allowable for at least the same reasons that independent claim 9 is allowable.

Again for similar reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, LaLonde fails to disclose or suggest each of the aspects recited in independent claim 12. For example, LaLonde fails to disclose or suggest a computer controller connected to workstations for receiving a desired fluid change associated with a manufacturing characteristic and enabling a change in a manufacturing instruction in response to the desired fluid change, as required by independent claim 12. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of independent claim 12 be withdrawn.

For similar reasons presented above, both LaLonde and Sakamoto fail to disclose or suggest a computer based method of displaying a changed manufacturing instruction, comprising establishing a change associated with a manufacturing characteristic and enabling a change in a manufacturing instruction in response to the changed manufacturing characteristic, as recited in claim 18. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of independent claim 18 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that the claimed invention, as amended, is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art references cited against this application. Applicants therefore request withdrawal of the rejections and timely allowance of all pending claims.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicants do not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicants decline to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

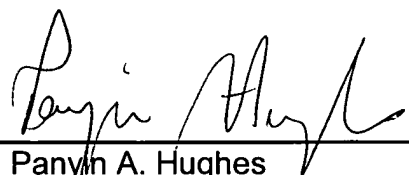
In discussing the specification, claims, and drawings in this Amendment, it is to be understood that Applicants are in no way intending to limit the scope of the claims to any exemplary embodiments described in the specification or abstract and/or shown in the drawings. Rather, Applicants are entitled to have the claims interpreted broadly, to the maximum extent permitted by statute, regulation, and applicable case law.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this Amendment and charge any additional required fees to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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